

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION:

Claims 1-3, 5-13 and 20 are pending and under consideration. Claims 1, 11 and 20 have been amended. Claims 4-10, 14-19 and 21 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 102 (KUROTORI ET AL.):

Independent claim 1 recites a blower arranged in the discharge passage, and a catalyst oxidation filter arranged in the discharge passage. Thus, the blower and the catalyst filter are each in the discharge passage.

In contrast, Kurotori et al. discloses a discharge passage in the form of a tube. This tube is not numbered, but is clearly illustrated in FIG. 1 of the reference. The catalyst bed 4 and suction pump 7 are relied upon by the Examiner as corresponding to the claimed catalyst oxidation filter and blower, respectively. However, the catalyst bed 4 and the suction pump 7 are not arranged in the tube. According to the Examiner, the suction pump 7 corresponds to both the claimed discharge passage and the claimed blower. However, the suction pump 7 is not a passage itself, but is instead a unit to suck solvent vapor. Kurotori et al., col. 5, ln. 1-5.

Independent claim 11 is patentably distinguishable from the cited reference at least for similar reasons as set forth with respect to claim 1.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

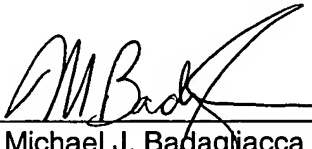
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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Response, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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